

Annotation Guidelines

Annotating a text is an active reading strategy to help readers conduct meaningful close reading of a text. By annotating, you gain a deeper initial reading and an understanding of the text that lasts. When you annotate effectively, you evaluate the entire passage and begin to recognize and isolate key information. If and when you come back to the text, that initial interchange is recorded for you, making an excellent and entirely personal study tool. Annotate any text that you must know well, in detail, and from which you might need to produce evidence that supports your knowledge or reading.

1. **Before reading: number the paragraphs** *(optional)*




Before you read, take a moment to number the paragraphs. This will act as a reference so you can easily refer to specific sections of the text.

2. **First reading**

Read the text all the way through once without writing anything to allow you to get a feel for the text as a whole from start to finish without interruptions.

3. **Second reading: annotation markings**

Conduct a second reading of the text using the symbols below to mark important information:

- **Underline** - Main Idea(s) / Claim(s)
-  (**Squiggly Line**) - New Vocabulary
- **?** (**Question Mark**) - Questions about text
-  (**Star**) - Important Information (supporting information)
-  (**Circle**) - Key terms
- **Optional:** Add annotation symbols to align with the reading task as specified by the teacher (i.e. if looking for ethos, pathos, and logos, develop symbols for each to streamline annotations).

4. **Third reading: writing in the margins**

Read the text a third time, adding to your annotations by writing/explaining what your marks mean. This can be done in the margins of the text or as Cornell Notes to be attached to the text. Your teacher may also include more specific annotations to be made based on your purpose for reading. Additional annotations may include one or more of the Six Strategies for Writing in the Margins (handout), identifying specific textual elements, labeling literary devices, etc.

5. **After reading: summary**

When you finish reading and marking the text, you should write a 3-5 sentence summary of the main ideas presented in the text. This requires you to synthesize all relevant information and present it in your own words. Your summary should include the main and supporting claims without giving too much specific detail of the text. This is an overview of what you have read.

Six Strategies for Writing in the Margins

The six strategies below will help readers create meaning and understand complex texts. Writing in the margins helps students interact with a text so as to read critically and actively. One or more of these strategies can be used for any chosen text. Thoughts can be written in the margins of the text, on sticky notes, or in Cornell notes.

<p>Visualize Visualize what the author is saying and draw an illustration in the margin. Visualizing what authors say will help you clarify complex concepts and ideas.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>When visualizing, ask:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What does this look like? ● How can I draw this concept/idea? ● What visual and/or symbol best represents this idea? 	<p>Summarize Briefly summarize paragraphs or sections of a text. Summarizing is a good way to keep track of essential information while gaining control of lengthier passages.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Summaries will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State what the paragraph is about ● Describe what the author is doing ● Account for key terms and/or ideas
<p>Clarify Clarify complex ideas presented in the text. Readers clarify ideas through a process of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Pausing to clarify ideas will in read your understanding of the ideas in the text.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>In order to clarify information, you might:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define key terms ● Retread sections of the text ● Analyze or connect ideas in the text ● Paraphrase or summarize ideas 	<p>Connect Make connections within the reading to your own life and to the world. Making connections will improve your comprehension of the text.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>While reading, you might ask:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How does this relate to me? ● How does this idea relate to other ideas in the text? ● How does this relate to the world?
<p>Respond Respond to ideas in the text as you read. Your responses can be personal or analytical in nature. Thoughtful responses will increase engagement and comprehension.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Readers will often respond to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interesting ideas ● Emotional arguments ● Provocative statements ● Author's claims ● Facts, data, and other support 	<p>Questions Question both the ideas in the text and your own understanding of the text. Asking good questions while reading will help you become a more critical reader.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>While reading, you might ask:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the author saying here? ● What is the author doing? ● What do I understand so far? ● What is the purpose of this section? ● What do I agree/disagree with?